

SEND Forum - 18/11/21 -Stacey and Louise

Jo Bispham gave a quick update on EP Service - referral forms for Development & Behaviour Pathway have been updated, these should be on the Local Offer but will be sent out with presentation slides.

Graduated response training has now been delivered to over 20 schools across BCP, awaiting evaluation. Jo has also delivered training to SEND Governors.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance training, it had been hoped that this training would have been delivered, however lack of capacity meant this hasn't happened. Other LAs have developed and delivered this training in their areas, Jo is looking to get a working group together as would like to have a resource pack developed for BCP area. Jo will get back to us in New Year with plans going forward.

Simon McKenzie - explained that written statements of action were required by 7th December.

(My note: Could BCP get teachers and schools to assess SEND in their schools, noting the challenges they face, and then discuss whether a change in curriculum could help? There are so many academies; surely this creates a level of freedom...)

Simon- Children's Services Update. Funding of mainstream schools needs to be reviewed.

Children need more support.

Private equity firms/independent settings are making huge profit.

We need to increase capacity in special schools and improve support in mainstream school. 11% of EHCP Children are going into independent schools, as there is nowhere else for them to go.

Money needs to meet the needs of children.

Looking at developing descriptors for banding, with funding related to these descriptors. This work may come into fruition in April, hopefully with changes in school around September.

The number of EHCPs is increasing.

Doug Gubbins - Old Town First School Headteacher:

Doug is pleased that banding is being addressed. £5000 is not covering complex needs and provision set out in EHCPs. Staffing is an issue; case workers have not attended reviews and things are not efficient.

Doug wanted to be a part of the EHCP working group but received no reply. As a school, they have experienced challenges.

Doug has satellite provision on his grounds and finds this valuable.

Simon feels this need to be extended - BCP have now employed 3 Case Managers each overseeing a team of caseworks also need to recruit Business Support Officers. Expressions of Interest have gone out to mainstream schools with view to them having satellite provision.

Doug – 2/3 children 'with' autism/speech and language issues identified in early years. There is a desperation for specialist places, but they want to match/ensure appropriate places rather than trying pull places out of a hat.

Jo - To include a wide range of needs in settings, there needs to be better funding.

The graduated response will be updated and made more accessible online. People are needed to work as a group with a view to moving things forward.

Claire O' Brien - Annual Survey should run again around June 2022. Only 37 children participated, and over 100 (193) parent carers participated in the 2021 survey. We need to engage children and young people to complete this. Claire shared some of the survey results. There are lots of positives from an educational setting perspective. Children seemed to feel safe at school but not within the wider environment. Many of these had EHCPs.

Bespoke training has been delivered to 4 settings.

The BCP EHCP template is being renewed. Mainstream schools tend to complete this so SENDCo input would be appreciated. Once sorted, training will be provided. There will be a monthly EHCP audit. This could go towards Quality Assurance. All paperwork - EHCNA, EHCP & AR being looked at to ensure consistency around language.

Ami Lall - SEND Personal Budget. These slides can be shared once forwarded.

Working with parent carers and SENDiass to produce explanations. There was so much discussed in this section, I struggled to keep up...especially as I was writing in the chat box.

Essentially, parents cannot go to tribunal if their request for a personal budget is declined. Parents should receive written notice of a decision. However,

communication is poor and this is not happening. Parents are encouraged to contact the SEND team.

When parents request money for provision outside of school, this impacts on the money available to the school. One education professional was concerned this could cause issues between parents and schools, when they need a good working relationship. Especially as schools are legally obliged to provide support included in the EHCP.

Schools must fund the first £6000 of SEND provision, but this might not necessarily be used for an individual child.

There are different amounts and top ups available. Once the slides have been provided, these can be forwarded as they are more detailed.

I tried to save the chat content but couldn't sadly. There were some good discussions on there, which ultimately reinforce the need for all of the work currently being addressed through the WSOA groups and other projects such as The All-Age Autism Review.